



State of New Jersey

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

TRENTON NJ 08625

JAMES E. MCGREEVEY
Governor

REGENA L. THOMAS
Secretary of State

Reply to: STATE HISTORICAL RECORDS ADVISORY BOARD
NEW JERSEY STATE ARCHIVES
DIVISION OF ARCHIVES AND RECORDS MANAGEMENT
225 WEST STATE STREET, P.O. BOX 307
TRENTON, NJ 08625-0307
TEL. (609) 777-3598 • FAX (609) 292-9105

29 July 2004

Dear Friend of New Jersey Archives and History,

New Jersey is pleased to join other mid-Atlantic states in celebrating **Archives Week 2004** from 10-16 October—a week-long annual observance of the importance of archival and historical records to people's lives. The theme chosen for this year's activities is: ***"Playing with History: Recreation and Amusement in Archives."*** This topic resonates especially well in New Jersey, with the great popularity of the Jersey Shore, the Delaware River, and our parks as leisure-time destinations.

The State Historical Records Advisory Board (SHRAB) encourages county and local archival, historical, and cultural organizations to observe Archives Week by sponsoring educational and commemorative activities and events that tell the story of New Jersey's people. If you have already planned Archives Week activities, SHRAB would like to help you publicize them. Please submit information about your planned event(s) to Barbara Pepe, SHRAB Assistant, New Jersey State Archives, P.O. Box 307, Trenton, NJ 08625-0307 or via email at <barbara.pepe@sos.state.nj.us>. We will then include them on SHRAB's web site <<http://www.njarchives.org/links/shrab.html>>.

If you have not yet planned any events, we've enclosed a [list of suggested activities](#) from exhibits to workshops that your organization may wish to consider—but don't limit yourself to these suggestions! Be creative! SHRAB wants to help you develop ideas for participation in Archives Week. Call Barbara Pepe at (609) 777-3598 or send her an email to discuss the possibilities.

As part of any event you plan, we suggest that you invite your town and county officials, and state legislators to participate in some way. Members of SHRAB from your region may also be able to attend (see the enclosed [roster of SHRAB members](#)). And as Director of your State Archives, I would be pleased to participate as well. And don't forget to invite the press! All these provide excellent photo opportunities and draw attention to the significant work that your organization does in preserving the rich history of New Jersey's people.

Thanks for your dedication to New Jersey history. Share your enthusiasm with others during Archives Week!

Sincerely yours,

Karl J. Niederer
State Historical Records Coordinator

Enclosures

List of Suggested Archives Week Activities

The Way We Were—Archival Awareness Days

Based on records in your archives, recreate an appropriate period in the history of your community (a particular historic event in October, for example, would be ideal) and generate the interest of local government officials, schools, merchants, civic organizations, churches, arts groups, etc. for a community-wide celebration. Specific events, such as those below, might be organized. Stores might roll back prices on some items to the levels that they were during the period being observed.

A Day in the Life of (YOUR COMMUNITY)

Select one day to examine and exhibit information on everyday life in your community. Who owned what property, and who lived where? What vendors were licensed? Where did people work? What stores were in business, and what wares did they sell? What were the community's primary institutions and who were its leaders? How many carpenters, lawyers, farmers, students, factory workers, etc. lived here? What religious or ethnic groups were present? Current officials, business people, and/or community leaders could make presentations about what life was like on the designated day. Perhaps descendants of individuals who lived in the local community at the time could offer presentations.

Food, Fashion, Fun—From the Past

Organize a dinner dance and fashion show featuring foods, clothing styles, and music popular in earlier times, as documented in local archival material. This event could address a variety of periods in the history of your local community. Develop such an event in cooperation with historical societies, local restaurants, educational institutions, etc.

Genealogy of a Property

Like families, buildings and properties have unique histories that can be traced through historical records. Conduct a "genealogical search" through deeds, tax records, and other records related to one property; this could be a focal point for looking at the evolution of a neighborhood or an entire community. The archival profile could be supplemented by other historical information about what was going on around the property at the time, both locally and nationally.

Archival Scavenger Hunt for Students

As the basis for school art or essay contests, create a "scavenger hunt" for interesting information contained in archival material. Schools would have different levels of student poster or writing competitions (e.g., an art class assignment to create a poster to promote land development in the community in the late 1800s, a creative writing exercise to write a week-long diary for a fictional community leader in a designated year). The projects should be based on actual information from an archives.

Volunteers

Recognize volunteers during Archives Week. The cadre of volunteers you depend on would enjoy and welcome acknowledgment of their work. Consider some event or ceremony that lets them know you fully appreciate their contribution to your organization.

Teachers

Make sure teachers in your community know about your Archives Week events. This can be a time for them to become acquainted with your historical records as an educational resource for use in the classroom.